



### **Class Descriptions:**

(Young Children's Developmental Dance consists of three levels: **Discovering Dance I**, **Discovering Dance II**, and **Introduction to Dance**. Every class will have its routine and will be consistent. Children learn best this way, feel comfortable within the environment, and develop trust. While we do introduce students to correct and careful technique, the enjoyment of dance always comes first! The instructor wants the student to enjoy and feel at ease when coming to class each week. We want each student to be willing to participate each week. Presenting the dance material through movement games and stories encourages this positive behavior and stays consistent with their attention span and developmental capabilities. Repetitions of these levels are encouraged!!!)

**\*\*DISCOVERING DANCE I:** This class is for first year students **ages 3 ½ -4 ½**. Although ballet is used as the foundation, at this level the class is taught as a creative movement class. Each class starts with a sharing circle, which encourages students to speak in front of others. Within the sharing circle each student is asked to take a turn sharing something **verbally** with the group. This assists social skills, performance quality, and self-esteem. Then we usually stretch our muscles on the floor and work on body alignment and pointing our toes. Through stories and games, students will then learn 1st, 2nd, and 3rd ballet positions of the feet. They will then learn plies, relevés, and jumps. Students also learn choreographed dances that reinforce basic gross and fine motor skills (*Tuty Ta*, *Shake Your Sillies Out*, *Knees Up Mother Brown*, *Animal Action* and much more). Jumping, hopping, walking, running, skipping, clapping, stomping, galloping, balance, and circling are enforced in these activities. The last section of class is geared toward creativity. We play creative games like *Secret Garden* and *Dance Freeze*. Following directions, Level changes, recognition of different movement qualities, and identifying shapes with our bodies are explored through this. Dress up time is usually given to express their creativity further. This class is a fun exploration into movement, rhythm, and music all done in a fun and positive environment.

**\*\*DISCOVER DANCE II:** This is usually the students second year of dance and is geared toward **ages 4 ½ -5 ½**. This class is similar to Discover Dance I except students are now exposed to more steps and technical training. The creative process is a little more structured due to the students having a longer attention span. There is a great emphasis on musicality, rhythm, and counting. There is more time spent at the barre working on plies, relevés, port de bras, proper body alignment, and reviewing the positions. In the center, turnout, pointing toes, and straightening the knees are reinforced through the introduction of tendu, pique, and passé. The across the floor exercises of chasse and leaping are introduced and enhance these skills. Skipping and swaying are emphasized more thoroughly in the creative movement section of class. This class is an exciting continuation to the art of dance and allows children to obtain confidence, coordination, and to understand movement basics.

**\*\*INTRODUCTION TO DANCE:** This class is a transition class between the pre-school classes and the beginning level classes. Introduction is usually a combination of ballet, tap, and jazz for children **5 ½ -6 ½ years** old. This class is similar to Discover Dance II but there is more of an emphasis on the correct and careful ballet technique and body alignment. The last 15 minutes of class is geared toward basic tap and jazz technique. With 5 year olds with no dance experience, Discover Dance II might be suitable for that student, but lots of beginning 5 year olds do fine in Intro. To Dance. This all depends on the child's individual developmental rate. Parents should base their decision on their knowledge of their child's personality and capacity. This class is a great opportunity for children to be introduced to the different dance forms and styles in an encouraging and supportive environment. **TAP ALWAYS BEGINS THE THIRD WEEK OF CLASS!**

**\*\*BEGINNING THROUGH ADVANCED LEVEL CLASSES AND ADULTS** (AGES 6-UP): Within these classes the faculty strives to promote the art of dance by teaching correct and careful technique as well as body awareness. Our goal is to enhance self-esteem, encourage self-discipline, and promote a sense of individuality within a nurturing, loving, and supportive environment.

**Blue Crew Dance Company:** Blue Crew Dance Company is the recreation center's youth dance company. It is reserved for those who take classes in the fall and spring semesters. Students must be enrolled in at least one dance class per-week at the recreation center, one of which must be in jazz or ballet, must meet advanced skill requirement, and **must have permission of the instructors**. Opportunities to perform at different venues may come about. Blue Crew Dance has a goal to serve as an educational establishment for the community and young dancers who want to excel in their technical ability, performance skill, and their enjoyment of dance. Blue Crew dance and Parks and Recreation hosted and participated in a dance workshop with the global educational organization *Up with People*. Blue Crew has had the opportunity to participate in a workshop with VCU alumni and pre-professional Emily Todd, artists of the Liz Lerman Dance Exchange, artists from JMU dance alumni, and artists from Rockingham Ballet Theatre. Several members of Blue Crew performed in The New Dance Festival at the Forbes center, collaborating with the JMU School of Theatre and Dance (2010). Blue Crew has had the opportunity to perform at several venues including Burg's Got Talent, Dayton Church of the Brethren, Bridgewater College, Children's Museum, and Waterman and Spotswood Elementary.

**Where to buy dance shoes and clothing:** Dance attire can be purchased at Payless, Wal-Mart, Target, Ballet Extension in Bridgewater, online through Discount Dance Supply ([discountdance.com](http://discountdance.com)), or any other online dance catalog.



